The Government envisages a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking of the rivers of the country in a fully consultative manner.

Restoration of water bodies

†1453. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to restore five lakh water bodies in the country;

(b) if so, by when this decision is likely to be implemented;

(c) the additional amount of water likely to be available in the country as a result thereof; and

(d) the additional land in the country which would be irrigated with this water?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) The Finance Minister in the Budget Speech, 2004-05 has proposed to launch a scheme to repair, renovate and restore Water Bodies in the country that are directly linked to agriculture. To begin with a pilot project in atleast five districts is proposed for the current year. The Finance Minister has also announced launching of National Water Resources Development Project after completion of the Pilot Projects and its validation. The Government is in the process of finalising details about taking up the scheme. The additional water likely to be available and land to be irrigated depends on the actual schemes to be prepared for the purpose after the completion of the Pilot Project.

Accelerated irrigation benefit programme

†1454. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI.
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a programme was launched for getting the accelerated irrigation benefits in the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, when this programme has been undertaken;

(c) the total amount spent under programme till March, 2004; and

(d) the additional irrigation capacity generated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRl JAl PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) The Central Government launched the accelerated irrigation benefits Programme (AIBP) during 1996-97 to provide Central Loan Assistance (CLA) for accelerating implementation of such ongoing approved major/ medium irrigation projects which are in an advanced stage of completion and which are beyond the resources capability of the State Government. An amount of Rs. 14,670 crore has been released as CLA under this programme for 181 major/medium and 3810 surface water minor irrigation schemes since inception of the programme. Under this programme an irrigation potential; of 2,195 thousand hectare has been created upto March, 2003 through Major & Medium projects and 67.35 thousand hectare through surface water minor irrigation schemes upto March, 2004.

Salinity ingress in coastal areas

1455. SHRl S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details regarding salinity ingress in the coastal areas in Tamil Nadu and other States,

(b) what remedial steps and preventive measures have been taken by Government to address the salinity ingress in the coastal areas in the country; and

(c) the details of funds allocated for this purpose during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRl JAl PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Studies undertaken by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) have shown salinity ingress in Minjur area, Tiruvallur district and localized pockets in Radhapuram-Kuttam area, Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. Some parts of coastal areas of West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Union Territories of Diu & Pondicherry have also been found affected by ingress of sea water in low-lying areas and rivers.